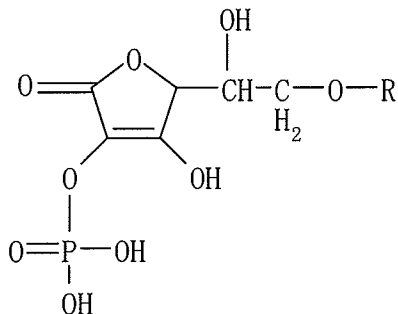


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. **(currently amended):** An agent for skin external use, comprising:
a salt of higher fatty acid ester of ascorbic acid-2-phosphoric acid ester, said higher fatty acid ester of ascorbic acid-2-phosphoric acid ester being represented by the following formula (1):



Formula (1)

wherein R is a ~~higher fatty acid residual group, and~~
~~a polyhydric alcohol residual group of an aliphatic carboxylic acid having 10 to 20 carbon~~
atoms, and 1,2-pentanediol or 1,2-hexanediol.

2. **(canceled).**
3. **(currently amended):** The agent for skin external use as claimed in claim 1, wherein R in the formula (1) is a residual group of lauric acid, myristic ~~aeie~~acid, palmitic acid, stearic acid, 2-hexyldecanoic acid or isostearic acid.

4. **(previously presented):** The agent for skin external use as claimed in claim 1, wherein R in the formula (1) is a residual group of palmitic acid.

5. **(previously presented):** The agent for skin external use as claimed in claim 1, wherein R in the formula (1) is a residual group of 2-hexyldecanoic acid.

6. **(previously presented):** The agent for skin external use as claimed in claim 1, wherein the salt of higher fatty acid ester of ascorbic acid-2-phosphoric acid ester is a Na salt, a K salt, a Mg salt or a Zn salt.

7. **(previously presented):** The agent for skin external use as claimed in claim 1, wherein the salt of higher fatty acid ester of ascorbic acid-2-phosphoric acid ester is contained in an amount of 0.01 to 20% by mass.

8. **(canceled).**

9. **(canceled).**

10. **(currently amended):** The agent for skin external use as claimed in claim ~~8~~1, wherein the dihydric alcohol ~~of 5 or 6 carbon atoms~~ is contained in an amount of not less than 0.05% by mass and less than 12% by mass.

11. **(canceled).**

12. **(canceled).**

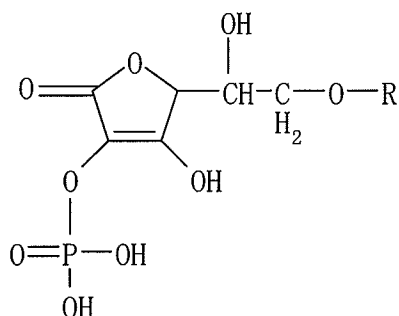
13. **(previously presented):** The agent for skin external use as claimed in claim 1, wherein water is further contained.

14. **(previously presented):** A cosmetic comprising the agent for skin external use of claim 1.

15. **(canceled).**

16. **(canceled).**

17. **(currently amended):** A stabilizer for an agent for skin external use containing a salt of higher fatty acid ester of ascorbic acid-2-phosphoric acid ester, said higher fatty acid ester of ascorbic acid-2-phosphoric acid ester being represented by the following formula (1):



Formula (1)

wherein R is a higher fatty acid residual group of an aliphatic carboxylic acid having 10 to 20 carbon atoms, said stabilizer comprising a polyhydric alcohol 1,2-pentanediol or 1,2-hexanediol or both.

18. **(canceled).**